

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

1.—OCCURRENCE OF THE LION IN PERSIA.

I was very interested to read Lt.-Col. G. F. Heaney's note on this subject in your issue for April, as it leaves me in no doubt that the animal which I myself saw was none other than a lion.

My battalion was at the time in camp on the banks of the Kharki River in the gorge it forms between the Zagros Range and Khulian Khu, a very wild country about 40 miles north of Dizful, the time was Christmas 1941.

One day, I and another officer were out after partridge and small game, although we had a couple of orderlies with rifles with us in case of a shot at a mountain sheep or ibex, it was late in the afternoon when my friend and I went to explore a deep fissure in the solid limestone range from which a stream flowed, when looking down, I saw what I took to be a large beast of prey strolling quite leisurely along the edge of the stream. I thought at first it was a leopard but no spots or markings were evident it being a greyish colour all over, I took it to be a large wild cat or something of the nature of the South American Puma. At the time it never entered our heads that it might have been a lion. It had no mane and would I should say be about the size of a small female lion. Unfortunately we had got ahead of our orderlies and by the time we could attract their attention without noise, the beast had turned a corner beyond which we were unable to proceed.

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2.—WEARING OF TEETH IN TIGER.

I enclose 3 photos of a tiger's skull. It appears to have been a very old beast, the teeth being worn flush with the gums except for the upper big fangs which were about half an inch out. The skin was dull and tawny though the black marks were still black. The skin was almost parchment thin and one could see the light through it nearly all over the body, the hair was short but there was plenty of it.

I have seen the skin and skull of another very old tiger—a huge beast, and his skin was also tawny but the stripes had gone quite brown and his teeth were huge and absolutely perfect.

The present one was shot by a B.O.R. about 8 miles from here and he said the cow had no marks on it except some scratches on one cheek and its neck was broken. The tiger's claws were perfectly good.

I have the skull and would send it to you but I am afraid of its getting lost with traffic as it is at present.